

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

PENDING CLAIMS

Claims 15-25 are now pending in this application. Claims 1-11 and 13-14 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

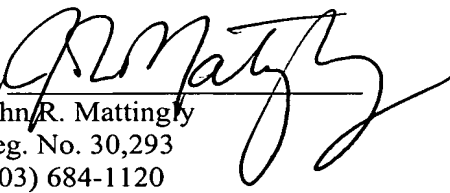
Applicants submit herewith an Information Disclosure Statement and request consideration of the listed references. The IDS is filed subsequent to receipt of an Office Action in a corresponding case filed in the Japan Patent Office (JPO Action). An English translation of the JPO Action which cites the references and the rejection is submitted with the Information Disclosure Statement. The US patents that are submitted are the US counterparts to the Japan published applications that are cited in the JPO Action, as follows: JP-A-11-39795 is equivalent to US Pat No. 6,343,281 and JP-A-10-320191 is equivalent to US Patent No. 6,101,255. A concise explanation of the relevance of JP-A-07-50663 is provided by the English language Abstract of the reference.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request consideration of the information Disclosure Statement and examination of claims 15-25.

Respectfully submitted,

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JRM/so
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